



## City of Gaithersburg Press Release

**Contact:** Public Information Director  
City of Gaithersburg  
301-258-6310  
cityhall@gaithersburgmd.gov

### For Immediate Release

## All Aboard! Gaithersburg Book Festival Kid Lit Adventure Leaves the Station May 1

**Gaithersburg, Md. – April 26, 2021** – Beginning on Saturday, May 1, children, teens and families can jump on board the 2021 Gaithersburg Book Festival ride to enjoy literary stops at multiple “Inspiration Stations” throughout the City and on the Festival’s YouTube channel throughout the month.

“Even though we’ve gone virtual again in 2021, we’ve put together a variety of interactive activities across Gaithersburg that we hope will inspire children and adults alike in their love of reading and great books,” said Festival Founder and Gaithersburg Mayor Jud Ashman. “We invite you to explore neighborhoods across our great city, while adventuring into great literature.”

Inspiration Stations include:

### GBF StoryWalk®!

Get outside and enjoy this in-person and safe reading adventure by visiting five locations around Gaithersburg. At each location, you’ll find the first page of a story and follow along the StoryWalk® track until you reach the end of the book. Snap photos and share the family fun on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with #GBF and #GBFStoryWalk.

All participants must follow local COVID safety protocols and are encouraged to wear face coverings, stay six feet away from others, and enjoy with members of their own household.

The GBF StoryWalk® is sponsored by [The Basics, a Nonprofit Montgomery and](#) Montgomery Moving Forward pilot program for young children.

There are four StoryWalk® tracks at five Gaithersburg locations available during the entire month of May. Visit them at:

- [Constitution Gardens](#) (112 Brookes Ave.) – “**Carry Me!**” by Susan Stockdale. A beautifully illustrated book for very young scientists to begin to explore adaptations, habitats and life cycles.
- [Diamond Farms Park](#) (857 Quince Orchard Blvd.) – “**Bears in a Band**” by Shirley Parenteau. An adorable story of little bears who have fun making music with their instruments.
- [Griffith Park and City Hall Grounds](#) (31 South Summit Ave.) and [rio Lakefront Shopping Center](#) (9811 Washingtonian Blvd.) – “**Stripes of All Types / Rayas de todas las tallas**” (bilingual) by Susan Stockdale. Gorgeous illustrations introduce readers to a wide range of striped animals through bouncy, alliterative rhyme in both English and Spanish.

- [Downtown Crown](#) (119 Crown Park Ave.) – “**Astro Girl**” by Ken Wilson-Max. The stars are the limit for a little girl who brings space travel up close for young readers and offers an inspiring ending.

### Children’s and YA Author Presentations

Readers ages 2-16 will want to make this stop at the [Virtual Gaithersburg Book Festival](#) to tune in to [children’s](#) and [young adult](#) presentations by 17 of today’s most popular authors. Look over the [schedule](#) and be sure to add your favorites to your calendar! Presentations premiere on the [Festival YouTube channel](#) every weekday Monday, May 17 to Friday, May 28 and remain available for viewing for a minimum of 30 days.

As a bonus, at the end of each author presentation, blossoming writers will be given three Story Starters to “choo” upon for writing inspiration. Stories can be emailed to the Festival at [gbfstories@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:gbfstories@gaithersburgmd.gov) to be entered into a random drawing on May 31, 2021 for a chance to win a special prize!

### Writing Workshops for Elementary School Students.

Registration opens Saturday, May 1, for two special children’s writing workshops, hosted on Zoom:

- [Astronauts Zoom! Astronauts Write!](#) (Saturday, May 8 at 11 a.m. EDT) – Discover how real astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS) live and work every day (and night) in the new book, “Astronauts Zoom!” You’ll imagine you’re an astronaut on the station and write a letter or email to your family or friends. This workshop will be led by Deborah Lee Rose, an internationally published, award-winning children’s author whose newest book, “Astronauts Zoom! An Astronaut Alphabet,” is illustrated with “you are there” NASA photos of female and male astronauts on the ISS.
- [Create Haiku Poetry!](#) (Saturday, May 15 at 11 a.m. EDT) – Make artworks and create haiku poetry! Haiku poetry is about one breath long, and often focuses on nature. After reading sample poems and discussing the craft of writing Haiku poetry, you will create mini artworks and write your own. This workshop will be led by Jenny Klein, who has worked as a classroom teacher, gifted and talented teacher, staff developer and reading specialist for Montgomery County Public Schools.

Several [Workshops for Teens and Adults](#) are also available and can be found on the Festival website. All workshops are free and will take place via Zoom. Spaces are limited, so register soon.

### Virtual Tours of Authors’ Creative Spaces

Take a virtual tour of your favorite authors’ Creative Spaces from the Festival YouTube Channel. These pre-recorded virtual tours may include the desks, unique tools, art, or even a plant or a pet that helps an author write.

### Playlists from YA Authors

YA readers can enjoy creating or listening to **playlists curated by GBF’s Young Adult authors** with motivational, inspirational, and empowering songs they use to help them write. These too will be available on the [Festival YouTube Channel](#).

### View the High School Poetry Contest Finalists’ Poems

Visit [Bohrer Park at Summit Hall Farm](#) (506 South Frederick Ave.) to get outdoors and view the [poems written by the 12 finalists in the Festival’s High School Poetry Contest](#). Poets are students at high schools throughout the Metropolitan Washington Area.

Pick your favorite poem, then visit the [GBF website](#) to vote for it by May 31. The poem with the most votes will win the Fan Favorite Award, and will be announced on June 4. The first-, second-, and third-place winners will be announced on the Festival website Friday, May 14, by 2021 Sandra Beasley, a local poet who served as the contest judge.

**And there's more....**

The 2021 Festival has plenty of programming for adults too. During the first two weeks of May, Festival programming will focus on a variety of genres for adults, including fiction, non-fiction, mystery, science fiction and poetry. Among the featured authors are Ishmael Beah, Sandra Beasley, Jeanine Cummins, Cory Doctorow, Pam Fessler, Robert Jones Jr., Dr. Michio Kaku, Jon Klassen, Carole Lindstrom, Carlos Lozada, Susan Page, Lisa Scottoline, Karen Tumulty, and more.

Keep up with GBF programming developments on the Festival website at [www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org](http://www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org). You can also [subscribe to the GBF newsletter](#) and follow the Festival on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@GburgBookFest](#) for the latest updates.

###

**About the Gaithersburg Book Festival**

Founded in 2010, the Gaithersburg Book Festival is a celebration of books, writers and literary excellence. It is one of the premier literary events in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The 2021 Festival will take place virtually throughout the month of May, featuring author appearances, panel discussions and writing workshops. The Gaithersburg Book Festival also hosts author events in Montgomery County throughout the year as a way to encourage continued appreciation for all things literary. The event is sponsored in part by [The David and Mikel Blair Family Foundation](#). For more information please visit [www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org](http://www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org), follow us on Twitter [@GburgBookFest](#) or like us on [Facebook](#).